

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS
Black Hills Career Academy
Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2006-2007**

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Dates of On Site Visit: September 26, 2006

Date of Report: October 17, 2006

This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by Special Education Programs. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

Promising Practice The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.

Meets Requirements The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.

Out of Compliance The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement.

Not applicable In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

Principle 1 – General Supervision
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General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Surveys
- Comprehensive plan
- Needs assessments
- Training

Promising practice

The steering committee reports Black Hills Career Academy (BHCA) provides a variety of educational opportunities for students to earn high school credits toward graduation. BHCA offers American Guidance Educational courses, A+LS (a computer based educational program which offers high school courses), and North Dakota Division of Independent Studies courses. Students can earn credits toward graduation through work experience and service learning projects.

BHCA provides educational services, structure and supports to students helping them continue their educational goals despite behavioral difficulties.

Meets requirements

The steering committee noted BHCA currently employs two special education certified teachers, which are fully licensed or certified to work with children with disabilities.

Needs Assistance

The steering committee reported BHCA needs to develop a plan to provide all staff with information and training to assist them in providing quality services to special education students. Staff members would benefit from planning and development of programming options for all students.

Validation Results

Promising practice

Through staff interviews and file reviews, the monitoring team agrees with the steering committee. Black Hills Career Academy utilizes several alternative curriculum models for students placed in their facility, to provide a variety of opportunities to earn credits toward graduation through on-line coursework, work experience and service learning projects.

Meets requirements

The monitoring team concluded through files reviews, observation and staff interviews, BHCA provides educational services, structure and supports to students helping them continue their educational goals despite behavioral difficulties.

The monitoring team determined BHCA currently is providing professional development opportunities for staff. Staff have attended training on the special education process, assistive technology devices and the A+ LS curriculum.

Needs Intervention

ARSD 24:05:25:06 Evaluation procedures

ARSD 24:05:27:15.01 Student transfers within state

ARSD 24:05:27:15.03 Transmittal of records for student transfers

ARSD 24:05:27:01.03 Content of IEP

An intake procedural checklist was not available and therefore procedures for student transfer and transmittal of records were not consistent with each referral. The monitoring team noted evaluation reports missing from the sending school district therefore eligibility determination was impossible to determine. Through interviews, the monitoring team concluded the SAT-10 and D-STEP had not been administered to student's onsite for the past two years. In the past the sending school district was responsible for assuring assessment was completed. On the IEP,

statewide and district assessments were checked that the students would take with or without modifications or accommodations. Through interviews, the review team found that staff did not administer those tests.

Through file reviews and staff interviews, the monitoring team determined the intake process used at BHCA did not allow the agency to make decisions necessary for implementation of the special education process. Responsibilities for BHCA, the home school district and Lutheran Social Services were not clearly defined. With staff transitions, student's listed on the sending district child count and the lack of an intake procedural checklist BHCA is out of compliance under the administrative rules list above.

Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education

All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3rd birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Surveys
- Complaints
- Hearings

Meets requirements

The steering committee reported BHCA meets the requirements of providing modified educational services to students. BHCA meets the requirements of providing educational services to all students, and do not suspend or expel special education students.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

Through staff interviews, file reviews and observation, the monitoring team noted BHCA meets requirements for free appropriate public education.

Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Surveys
- Comprehensive plan
- Personnel training

Meets requirements

The steering committee determined BHCA meets the requirements of securing signatures and involving parents in the re-evaluation process.

Needs Assistance

The steering committee reported a more comprehensive functional assessment is needed as well as the involvement of general educators.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

Through staff interviews and file reviews, the monitoring team concluded functional assessment has been completed in files completed since the special education process inservice. General educators attend all IEP meetings and BHCA involves parents in the reevaluation process by phone, e-mail and in person.

Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards

Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- File Reviews
- Surveys
- Comprehensive plan
- Parent Rights document

Meets requirements

The steering committee reported BHCA has not had a request for a complaint or a due process hearing within the past 5 years.

Needs Assistance

The steering committee reported a list of individuals who would serve as a surrogate parent if needed is not available in the district at this time. The foster parent would typically be assigned as the surrogate parent if parental rights have been terminated. BHCA had a list of surrogates, but they have moved out of the area.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

The monitoring team noted a list of surrogate parents is available and surrogate parent training has been provided to those on the list. The monitoring team agrees with the steering committee, no complaints or due process hearings were requested in the past 5 years.

Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- File reviews

Meets requirements

The steering committee reported BHCA meets the requirements for IEP content.

Needs Assistance

The steering committee concluded BHCA needs to provide better services for students who need transition services.

Needs Intervention

The steering committee determined BHCA needs to make sure that all required members (regular education teachers) are at each IEP meeting.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

Through files reviews, observations and staff interviews, the monitoring team determined BHCA meets requirements for all IEP content including transition

services and required IEP team members. Regular educators attend IEP meetings and special education personnel are documenting necessary transition services.

Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are placement decisions, consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- File Reviews
- Surveys

Meets requirements

The steering committee reports all students at BHCA receive special education services in the general classroom.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

Through files reviews, staff interviews and observation, the monitoring team determined all students receive special education services primarily in the general education classroom, however, for students requiring more support all continuum options are available.